



File Code: 1950
Date: June 22, 2020

Dear Interested Party:

The Forest Service is proposing to issue a new special use authorization (MRN388) to Howard Drilling, Incorporated to replace a currently expired authorization for a buried natural gas pipeline on the Marienville Ranger District, Allegheny National Forest. The use proposed for re-authorization is in Wetmore Township, McKean County, Pennsylvania (see attached map). The scoping documents are also posted on the Allegheny National Forest website at <https://www.fs.fed.us/nepa/fs-usda-pop.php/?project=58246> and available from the Marienville Ranger District. Comments regarding this project are requested by July 22, 2020. This scoping comment period may be the only opportunity for comment before a decision is made.

Proposed Action

The Forest Service is proposing to issue a new special use authorization for continued use of a buried natural gas pipelines as identified below and on the enclosed map. If approved, the use would be allowed to continue under new special use authorizations issued for new terms of up to a maximum of 30 years. The authorized uses would remain the same, and no increase in the scope or intensity of activities would occur.

The authorization occupies approximately 0.24 acres (1,056 feet by 10 feet) of National Forest System lands. This special use is in Management Area 2.2 (late-structural linkages). Management Area 2.2 is suitable for the re-authorization of existing special uses under the Allegheny National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (forest plan), which provides that "[a]ll existing and established permitted uses will remain suitable and may be renewed during the plan period" (Forest Plan, page 37.).

Type of Analysis

The project falls within category of exclusion 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 220.6 (e) (15). This category allows for "Issuance of a new special use authorization for a new term to replace an existing or expired special use authorization when the only changes are administrative, there are not changes to the authorized facilities or increases in the scope or intensity of authorized activities, and the applicant or holder is in full compliance with the terms and conditions of the special use authorization. There are no proposed changes to the authorized facilities or increases in the scope or intensity of authorized activities and the permittee has been in full compliance with the terms and conditions of their special use authorizations. This proposal falls within the categories of actions for which a project or case file and a decision memo are required.

Preliminary analysis did not indicate the presence of any extraordinary circumstances related to the proposed action that would warrant further consideration in an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement. The analysis will consider whether extraordinary circumstances related to the proposed action warrant further consideration in an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement. Resource conditions that will be considered include: federally listed threatened or endangered species and Forest Service sensitive species; floodplains, wetlands, and municipal watersheds; Congressionally designated areas such as wilderness, wilderness study areas, and national recreation areas; inventoried roadless areas; research natural areas; American Indian and Alaska Native



religious and cultural sites; and archaeological sites, and historical properties and areas (36 CFR 220.6 (b)). The mere presence of one or more of these conditions does not preclude use of the category. The degree of the potential effect determines whether extraordinary circumstances exist.

Administrative Review

Decisions that are categorically excluded from the preparation of an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement are not subject to objection before a decision is made. As a result, unless an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement is prepared, this project will not be subject to the notice, comment, or administrative review.

How to Comment

Written, facsimile, hand-delivered, oral, and electronic comments will be considered. Comments are requested by July 22, 2020. Comments received after this date will be considered to the extent that time allows. Comments received, including names and addresses of those who submitted comments, will be considered part of the public record and will be available for public inspection.

- **Mail:** Robert T. Fallon, District Ranger, Marienville Ranger District, 131 Smokey Lane, Marienville, PA 16239
- **Fax:** 814-927-2285
- **Email:** comments-eastern-allegheny-marienville@fs.fed.us. Electronic comments must be submitted in plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), portable document format (.pdf) Word (.doc or .docx), or any other format supported by Microsoft Office applications. Please enter the project name (*Howard Drilling Special Use Permit MRN388 Reissue Project*) on the subject line and include your name and physical mailing address with your comments.
- **Hand-delivered and verbal comments** may be submitted at the Marienville Ranger District, 131 Smokey Lane, Marienville, PA 16239 or by calling (814) 927-5700 during normal business hours. Normal business hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

For More Information

Additional information is also available from Sylvia Grisez, Realty Specialist, who may be contacted by telephone at 814-728-6232 or email at sylvia.grisez@usda.gov.

Sincerely,

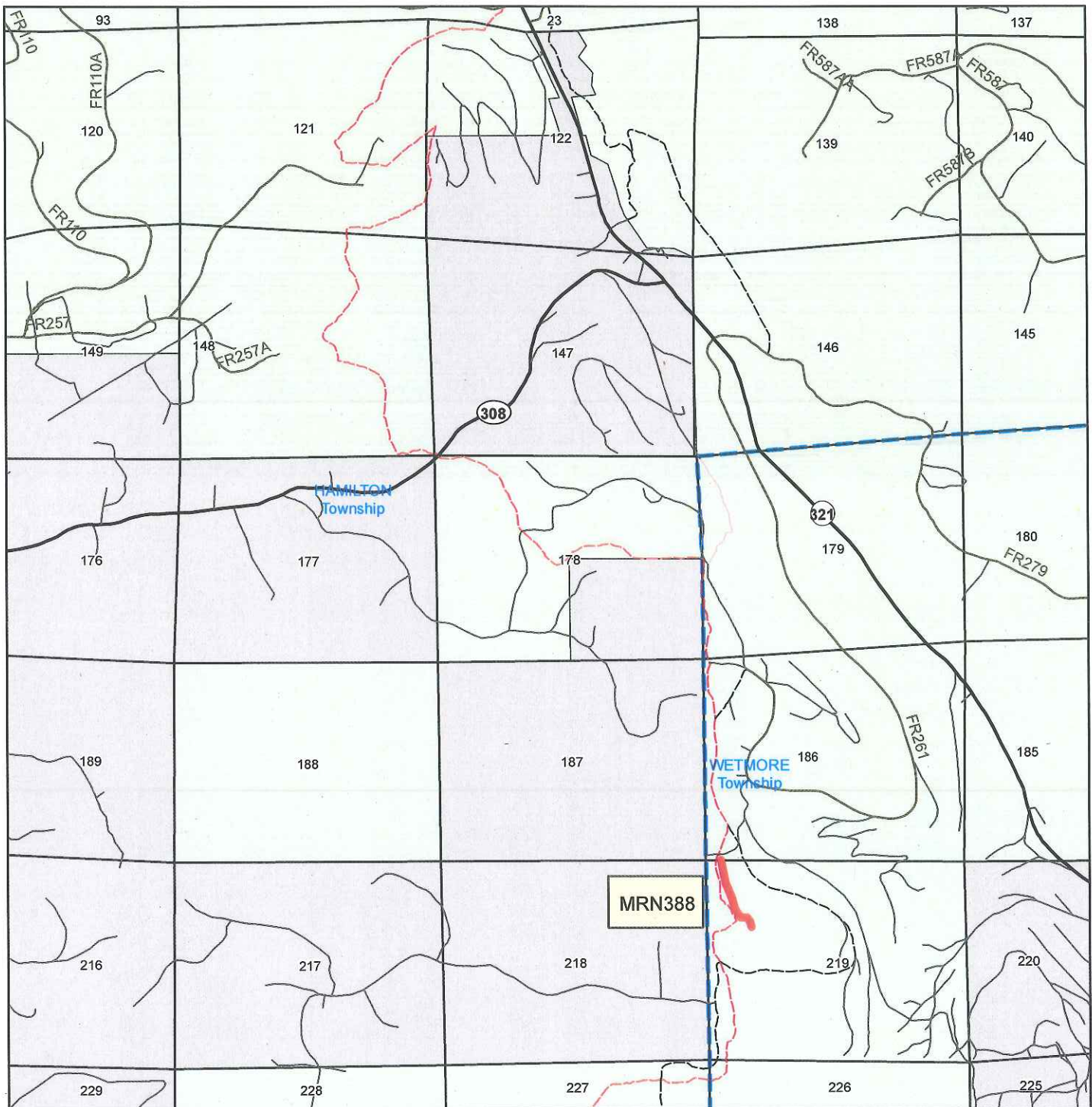


ROB FALLON
District Ranger



Special Use Authorization

Allegheny National Forest - Marienville Ranger District



Authorization Information

Name: Howard Drilling, Inc.
Authorization ID: Old:RDG13/New:MRN388
Primary Use Code: 631
Use Code Name: Oil and Gas Pipeline
Expiration Date: 12/31/2051
Lot(s)/Warrant(s): Lot 219, Warrant 2555
Township(s): Wetmore Twp., McKean Co.
Management Area: 2.2

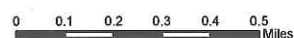
Disclaimer

The USDA Forest Service makes no warranty, expressed or implied regarding the data displayed on this map, and reserves the right to correct, update, modify, or replace this information without notification.

Legend

- Special Use Line
- Forest Service Ownership
- Corps of Engineers Ownership
- Non-FS Ownership

1 inch = 2,000 feet



PENNSYLVANIA



NAD 1983 UTM 17N



Map Author: sgrisez; Map Creation Date: 1/28/2020